

A BLACK CIVILIZATION

837 A further variation in the standards a husband and wife apply to
578 each other may be seen in the following account. Here, too, it will be noticed, when *dué* is not very assertive, *galle* is on more or less equal terms with him.

Dimala's wife was known about the various tribes as a woman who usually had an affair with some other woman's husband and was not always particular whether these lovers stood in the right relationship of *dué* to her. Dimala, too, always had a number of affairs. One day his wife abused him for having such relationships. "Yes," he replied, "I've got one woman, and you can do nothing. You've got your lovers—I've got my sweethearts. My head can think two ways. When you stay quietly by me and have no lovers, I'll sit quietly by you and have no sweethearts."

Such an understanding between spouses is most unusual and considered somewhat asocial. Ordinarily a husband would feel it his duty to beat his wife when she conducted herself in an unlawful way with another man.

Dimala, too, would have felt it necessary to beat his wife and condemn her for the act if she had been caught openly fornicating with someone. Tribal feeling would have driven him to it if his pride had not.

837 Five varieties of extra-legal sexual relations between men and
578 women are recognized as possible, i.e., the tribe would not condemn them as unpardonable offenses against customary law: (1) relations when the legal spouse of either or when both spouses are carrying on an affair without the mate's full knowledge; (2) runaway matches when the man and woman go to a distant clan to live—usually a true love match, but not always; (3) a union when a man steals a woman from her husband and takes her to his own clan; (4) a union when warring clansmen kill off the husbands of the women and keep them for themselves; and (5) the union of a daughter whose father has given her to a relative without a legal claim to her in another tribe.

Each of the above is considered illegal and condemned by all people, yet each is practiced to a considerable degree among all the tribes in this region, and each frequently leads to a permanent union that has full tribal recognition.

837 In the first type of liaison the man and woman usually meet in the
578 bush for a lovers' assignation, which always means sexual intercourse. A man ordinarily would choose a *galle* for such affairs, and a woman a *dué*; but they occur between *momo* and *kaminyer*, little *arndi* and

THE ABORIGINES OF EAST ARNHAM LAND

Relationship

All the various individuals of the tribe are related the one to the other, but that relationship is classificatory rather than personal, so that the relationship terms used by us cannot be a correct translation of the terms used by this aboriginal community. In the tribe are a certain number of men whom a given individual will call "father," the individual's actual father being one of that number. Certain other men are the individual's "gowal," or fathers-in-law, his actual father-in-law being included among them. 601 602

So all of a number of women of the tribe, including his actual mother, are his "ngandi," or mothers. A number of other women are an individual's "yappa," or sisters, and among these will be included his actual sisters. So right through the personnel of the tribe. Every individual member of the tribe is included in one of these many relationship groups or classes, and every relationship carries with it certain obligations. That is, an individual is required to fulfil the same obligations toward all those who stand in the relation of "ngandi" (mother) to him, as those which are due to his actual mother, and so on.

Thus is determined the attitude of every individual toward every other individual. This system of relationship lies at the basis of all social behaviour, and is of the utmost importance in the life of this aboriginal community. In connection with this system amazing qualities of memory are revealed, practically every individual knowing in what relation he or she stands to every one of the several hundred members of the tribe. This is the more remarkable in view of the dislocation in the regular order of descent occasioned by irregular marriages, of which there are a considerable number. 602 [182] [153] [588]